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Chief Operating Officer

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
313 N. Figueroa, Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 240-8101

April 26, 2005

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.  
Director and Chief Medical Officer

Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.  
Public Health Director and Health Officer

SUBJECT: **2005 WEST NILE VIRUS ACTION PLAN, MONTHLY FOLLOW-UP REPORT**

On March 8, 2005 we presented the Board our West Nile Virus (WNV) Prevention and Surveillance Plan for 2005. This is the first monthly follow-up report describing WNV prevention and surveillance activities in 2005.

So far in 2005, no human WNV case has been identified who was definitely infected this year; a suspected case reported in January was probably infected last fall. No WNV-infected mosquito pools have been detected in Los Angeles County (LAC). However, two WNV-infected dead birds have been identified from the far western part of the county.

Key activities which have been completed to enhance WNV prevention and surveillance in LAC within Public Health in the past month include:

- A meeting to coordinate surveillance and education activities was held with the five mosquito abatement districts and all LAC Public Health Programs working on WNV prevention and surveillance (Public Health Laboratory, Acute Communicable Disease Control, Environmental Health, and Veterinary Public Health).
- A letter to doctors and laboratories stressing reporting was finalized. This letter was distributed to all licensed LAC physicians and clinical laboratory directors last week (copy attached).
- A community WNV prevention presentation for 2005 was completed and will be distributed by the Health Education and Training Unit to the public health districts for their use in addressing community organizations.

Attached is the Summary Action Plan with the status of the specific activities. We will provide you with our next status report by May 16, 2005. In the meantime, if you have any questions or need additional information, let either of us know.

TLG:JEF:RC:sc  
502:011 REF 2813 (A007LM2005 #2)

Attachments

c: Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
**Public Health**

THOMAS L. GARTHWAITE, M.D.  
Director and Chief Medical Officer  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

JONATHAN E. FIELDING, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director of Public Health and Health Officer

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April 4, 2005

Dear Physician and Laboratory Director:

In 2004, 308 human West Nile Virus (WNV) cases were investigated and confirmed in Los Angeles County among hundreds of tested patients. West Nile Virus is now considered endemic (enzootic) to Southern California, so the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (LAC DHS) is increasing surveillance for WNV activity again this year. The first 2004 human WNV case occurred in early June, but given this winter's heavy rains and with appropriate warm weather for mosquito proliferation, this year we could have cases identified earlier than the summer-fall WNV season. LAC DHS will continue to track both West Nile fever and West Nile Neuroinvasive Disease (NID). Recent studies have indicated WNV fever is not as mild as first thought and effects of the infection can linger. The County's enhanced WNV human surveillance will allow for timely ascertainment of disease transmission and prevention of subsequent cases through the provision of information to local mosquito abatement districts. Case information will also guide us in providing targeted health education via the mass media and community organizations to communities at particularly high risk.

The LAC DHS has specifically added WNV infection to its list of reportable diseases by authority of the Health Officer under California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Sections 2503 and 2505. Physicians and laboratories are required to report all positive laboratory findings of WNV to the Department of Health Services within one (1) working day. A standard Confidential Morbidity Report (CMR) can be used; the CMR may be faxed to the Department of Health Services (DHS) Morbidity Unit at 1-888-397-3778 or called in during normal business hours to 1-888-397-3993.

We remind clinicians and infection control professionals that all cases of acute encephalitis and meningitis (including those with viral, bacterial, fungal, or parasitic etiologies) are already reportable under the current California Code of Regulations section 2500 to the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services within 1 working day by telephone.

This year, specimens positive for acute WNV infection in commercial labs do not require confirmation by the LAC DHS Public Health Laboratory to meet the stringent WNV case definition. Excellent correlation was found between WNV positive tests in commercial labs and subsequent confirmation in Public Health reference laboratories. Acute Communicable Disease Control (ACDC) Program recommends patients should not have WNV screening tests performed unless they have the following signs or symptoms: WNV fever (i.e. headache, fever, muscle pain rash lasting more than 3 days), aseptic meningitis, encephalitis, or acute flaccid paralysis.

The Los Angeles County Public Health Laboratory (LAC PHL) remains available for initial specimen testing and confirmation of ambiguous results.

**WEST NILE VIRUS SURVEILLANCE AND PREVENTION  
SUMMARY ACTION PLAN – Updated 14 April 2005**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>WNV Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>	<b>Notes</b>
DHS ACDC	Human surveillance	Clinician letter -- mandatory WNV reporting and prevention message	Completed	April 18, 2005	On July 1, 2004, the Health Officer made WNV infection reportable by clinicians and laboratories within one working day.
DHS ACDC	Human surveillance	Laboratory letter -- mandatory WNV reporting of results	Completed	April 18, 2005	
DHS ACDC	Human surveillance	Clinical consultation on WNV to medical providers	Continuous, year-round	Continuous	Schedule medical grand rounds for physicians
DHS ACDC	Human surveillance	Active surveillance at selected high risk areas within LAC	March 31, 2005	May 2005	Hospitals in eastern county were invited to join active surveillance project. Hospital will report all WNV tests performed in house or will receive free WNV testing by PHL.
DHS ACDC	Human surveillance	Update database and epidemiologic case history forms	March 18, 2005	Date of first case	Ongoing data cleaning
DHS ACDC	Human surveillance	Conduct Epidem. investigation	Continuous, year-round	Date of first case	ACDC professional staff review and investigate all suspected WNV case reports, clinical laboratory reports, and blood bank positive donors.
DHS ACDC	Human surveillance	Communication to local mosquito & vector control (MVCD) districts and CADHS	Continuous, year-round	Date of first case	ACDC communicates pertinent location to local MVCD so it can assess and apply control measures if warranted.
DHS ACDC	Human surveillance	Communication to State DHS	Continuous year-round	Continuous	To synchronize statistics with state

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DHS ACDC	Human surveillance	Summary reports of human cases	Continuous year-round	Date of first case	Analysis of confirmed cases on weekly or monthly basis. Update LAC DHS web page with accurate epidemiologic information.
DHS ACDC	Human surveillance	Analysis of human WNV surveillance data	Continuous year-round	Continuous	Generate weekly surveillance report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- send by e-mail to appropriate agencies</li> <li>- post on website for public</li> </ul>
DHS ACDC	Health education	Coordinate prevention messages, press conferences and press releases with MVCDs and State	Ongoing	Ongoing	Collaborate to extent possible on standard public health messages and special releases, informed by survey.
DHS ACDC	Health education	Update WNV information cards (palm cards) to reflect findings of LA Survey.	April 14, 2005 At printer	April 25, 2005	This is the main health educational handout. Will distribute to libraries, public health centers, hospitals, home improvement areas, health fairs, senior citizen centers, et al
DHS ACDC	Health Education	How to Mosquito Proof Your Home & Community	Complete	March 16, 2005	Parks & Recreations will partner with distribution of health education materials
DHS ACDC	Health Education	Toll free public information line in multiple languages	March 2-March 15, 2005	Re-update April 22, 2005	Review and update messages monthly or as needed.

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DHS ACDC	Health Education	Web page provides up-to-date figures on WNV activity in LAC. Links to appropriate sites for more information; access to downloadable materials	Ongoing	Ongoing	
DHS ACDC	WNV comprehensive status report	Provide information on cumulative human, bird, and mosquito indicators.	April 18, 2005	Following April 18, 2005	Information to be e-mailed to appropriate agencies, posted on WNV web site
DHS CHS (AHOs)	Speakers Bureau	Update 2004 slide set with new information from LA Survey.	ACDC updated April 12, 2005	April 12, 2005	172 presentations were provided by the speaker's bureau in 2004.
LAC VPH	Dead Bird Surveillance	Log calls from the public and MVCDs on dead birds. Arrange pick-up.	Continuous	Continuous	Arrange for test if bird has died recently (24-48 h) and belongs to corvid or raptor families.
LAC VPH	Dead Bird Surveillance	Perform VecTest (quick screening test) on dead birds	Continuous	Continuous	Confirmatory testing on positive birds is performed by LACPHL and California Viral and Rickettsial Disease Laboratory (VRDL)
LAC EH	Collaboration	Work with board officials, county agencies and cities in developing long term, permanent mosquito control services to uncovered areas through annexation or contractual agreements	Continuous	Continuous	Baldwin Park South Pasadena La Canada-Flintridge Santa Clarita Lancaster/Palmdale Hwy 14 corridor

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LAC EH	Collaboration	Respond to mosquito concerns in those cities and communities without routine mosquito surveillance and control services	Continuous	Continuous	Does not include abatement.
LAC EH	Outreach	Develop a WNV program for LAUSD cable channel.	Ongoing	May 16, 2005	
LAC EH	Public education and inter-departmental training	Routine literature distribution throughout all cities within the county and provide training to other departments	Continuous	Continuous	Materials from ACDC
LAC EH	Collaboration	Provide staff to DHS Speakers Bureau	Continuous	Continuous	
LAC EH	Coordination	Facilitate MVCD communications on mosquito and bird findings	Continuous	Continuous	Represent DHS in technical meetings on vector surveillance and control
Local MVCDs	Sentinel chickens Surveillance	Maintain sentinel chicken flocks at various geographic locations	Continuous	Continuous	Chickens are bled biweekly and tested at VRDL
Local MVCDs	Mosquito Surveillance	Test mosquito pools for arboviruses including SLE, WEE, and WNV	Continuous	Continuous	The CA DHS reports biweekly mosquito surveillance results in <i>CA Arbovirus Surveillance Bulletin</i>

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Local MVCDs	Mosquito Abatement	MVCDs receive reports from ACDC and VPH to identify areas of human and animal case activity	As needed	As needed	Mosquito larva abatement via larvacide, mosquito fish, and habitat elimination. Controlling adult mosquitoes is not a primary focus of any MVCD
Local MVCDs	Dead Bird Surveillance	Sites for positive birds are evaluated for possible mosquito abatement	Continuous	Continuous	
Local MVCDs	Public education	Districts' mission includes promotion of personal responsibility to reduce mosquito breeding sites.	Continuous	Continuous	Each MVCD serves a defined catchment area. Outreach thru mailings, billboards, and mass media

RC:sc

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